

**W**hy is management so preoccupied with the high performing organization initiatives?

Among the popular answers I have heard are that they are a hot new management trend the front office couldn't resist and that they are a knee-jerk reaction to last year's employee survey.

Skipping a recitation of the complete history of the HPO initiatives, I'll just note that they have



Steve Wright

actually been in development a long time — six of the seven vision elements (see table on page 3) we are using today were introduced at a strategic planning session in October 1998 and the HPO headlight team, which further developed and fleshed-out the vision, was formed in January 1999. We have also spent numerous hours devel-

oping means to integrate the new philosophy into the structure of the organization.

*Corporate group, continued from page 1*

"What I have not seen or read about is top management recognition of this change or an indication of agency appreciation for it. I would like to suggest some form of public recognition that notes the travel office's metamorphosis."

*(Editor's note: The Circuit agrees with King, so here's a public pat on the back for the folks in BPA's Corporate disbursement group. We welcome employee compliments for other work groups as well.*

*BPA's new rewards and recognition program encourages people to recognize others — inside and outside your own group. Employees can nominate other groups, or people in those groups, for awards.*

*In addition, the Circuit is interested in examples like the one above from Larry King. If you know of a group that has made major improvements that make your work easier or your life better, send the details and specifics and we'll follow-up. Use the addresses in the masthead below to mail information to the Circuit or to send an e-mail to the editor:*

*— Jack Odgaard)*

## Circuit

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## Putting HPO into perspective

This is simply to point out that concern for high performing organization principles came long before the employee survey and that we are seeking to put in place institutional solutions that provide a better chance for insuring the changes last longer than yesterday's newspaper.

If the popular answers are wrong, then why is management so preoccupied with the HPO initiatives? Because the HPO vision is a critical component necessary to assure BPA fulfills its mission.

Lest we forget, BPA's mission is to meet its public responsibilities through a commercially successful business. Motivated employees that believe this is a great place to work are the most critical element we need to provide the highest possible value to Northwest citizens.

We think BPA's mission is a noble one, and the public service ethic that is behind it is an inspiration to many employees. We want to build on this strength to create an organizational environment in which more employees love their jobs and believe BPA is a great place to work. The seven HPO vision elements, which fundamentally are designed around treating all employees with respect, are our guiding light for pursuing and, hopefully, achieving the workplace environment we desire.

HPO, then, is about creating an organizational environment that supports employees in achieving the goal of delivering public benefits to the region through our commercially successful businesses.

So, how are we going about seeking to improve the work environment? Mostly with lots of mundane but, we believe, essential tasks. For example, each of the business lines has created HPO action plans that identify the actions they will take to address each of the seven vision elements. They are now implementing those plans. To give another example, we have developed a system that evaluates 51 percent of managers' efforts on HPO issues (for example, how much weight should be given to employee survey results versus activities designed to achieve the vision elements).

We have created many teams that have been creating the important structure necessary to support this effort. For example, a team effort has been largely responsible for developing the managerial training that will be initiated this month. A rewards and recognition team has completed its work, resulting in broad new policies that have increased the potential for employees to get both monetary and nonmonetary awards.

Finally, we have created an HPO Management Council with membership from each of the busi-

ness line executive management teams to oversee the implementation of the system's development.

The way we are going about implementing the HPO vision may seem plodding and bureaucratic to some. But, it is our belief that, if we put strong systems in place to encourage and reward excellent managers who are focused on making employees successful, we will have our best chance of creating the highest possible value for the region.

I need to say, though, that the HPO vision is about more than just what management can do. It is our goal to create an environment that creates opportunities for employees to achieve excellence and satisfaction in their jobs. But, we also want all employees to believe it is part of their commitment to try to make BPA as good a place to work as possible by taking advantage of the opportunities provided and by striving to achieve our value that everyone is treated with mutual respect.

Each employee will be the judge of whether these efforts actually make BPA a better place to work. We actively want your feedback and are always looking for ways to make BPA a better place to work.

We fully realize the difficulty of what we are seeking to accomplish while we are in the midst of unprecedented change and uncertainty for employees. The potential for creating a regional transmission organization, the implementation of the Business Solutions Project and the redesign of the Shared Serviced product line create distractions that sometimes make it difficult to consider this a great place to work. We are, however, actively working to address employee concerns in these areas and recognize that how we handle these issues will have a significant impact on how employees feel about working at BPA.

What we have accomplished so far

As mentioned earlier, each of the business lines, Corporate and Shared Services has completed HPO action plans and the plans are incorporated in senior managers' contracts. The chart on page 3 connects the vision elements to some of the action items in the performance contracts of the vice presidents of the two business lines, Corporate and Shared Services. Further, the chart points out what employees should actually see in the workplace as a result of the action plans. All the planning in the world is useless unless it produces results.

As you are probably aware by now, a major emphasis is on connecting managers to employees. Managers from the vice presidents on down to most performance managers have contracts in which 51 percent of their performance evaluation is based on HPO-based activities. We have developed a system for evaluating this performance, which is far from perfect but we will assure that we

*Continued on page 3*

## March anniversaries

### 35 years

**Demetrios C. Assuras, "Jim"**, Management Analyst, IS Planning and Projects, Portland

**Harry L. Guinn**, Materials Handler, Materials Management, Vancouver  
**Charles D. Brinson**, Construction Representative, Facility Development, Vancouver

### 30 years

**Paulette I. Seeman**, Computer Assistant, Employee Services, Portland  
**James R. Cronholm**, Accountant, Accounting Operations, Portland  
**Terrin L. Pearson**, Hydraulic Engineer, Generation Scheduling, Portland  
**David A. Norgaard**, Lineman Foreman III, TLM Covington, Covington  
**John M. Welch**, Lead Mechanical Engineering Tech, Facility Development, Portland  
**Gerald A. Armstrong**, Electrical Engineer, Control Center Software Design, Vancouver

### 25 years

**Lynda Boetcher-Stelzer**, Vice President, Shared Services, Portland  
**Holly M. Frazier**, Public Utilities Specialist, Operations Planning, Portland

**Anthony M. Kocjan**, Supervisory Electrical Engineer, SPC, Eugene  
**Linda E. Dial**, Commodity Manager, Materials Management, Vancouver  
**Michael R. Boston**, Electronics Engineer, Control Center Software Design, Vancouver

### 20 years

**Deborah A. Deines**, Employee Development Specialist, Management Services, Portland

**Lorilee a. Gardner**, Computer Specialist, Application Services, Portland  
**Val H. Smith**, Engineering Technician, Weather & Streamflow Forecasting, Portland

**John E. Folts**, Power Operations Specialist, Duty Scheduling, Portland  
**Larry D. Brier**, Substation Operator, Substation Operations, North Bend  
**Danny J. Williams**, Welder, Substation Maintenance, The Dalles  
**John Vance Lutes**, Computer Specialist, Software Design & Maintenance, Vancouver  
**Minje P. Ghim**, Electrical Engineer, Substations, Portland

### 10 years

**Joseph M. Yegge**, Cable Splicer, Central Electrical Services, Vancouver  
**John H. Baker**, Chief, Substation Operator III, Substation Operations, Wenatchee

**Ethan R. Carlson**, Substation Operator Apprentice, Apprentices, Redmond

**John Michael Cenicerros**, Public Utilities Specialist, Transmission Supply, Vancouver

## Retirements

**Terry Y. Erickson**, Printing Specialist, Printing, retired January 1 with 29 years service.

**Susan A. Keto**, Contract Specialist, Construction/Services and Field Purchasing, retired January 29 with 22 years service.

**John M. Schluter**, Senior DC Substation Operator, Transmission Field Services, retired January 1 with 35 years service.

**Marsha K. Williams**, Technical Training Program Specialist, Technical Training & Continuing Education, retired January 29 with 24 years service.